

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: CONGEN SUGGESTIONS RE U.S. ROLE IN ITALY

IN RESPONSE BEAUDRY'S LETTER OF DEC. 17 (RECEIVED JAN. 12)

HEREWITH ARE SOME OF MY THOUGHTS ON EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THE
EMBASSY'S GOAL OF ENCOURAGING THE SPIRITUAL AND ELECTORAL RESURGENCE
OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES:

1. SINCE THE DIRECTIVES FOR ALL POLITICAL ACTIONS EMANATE FROM
ROME, IT SEEMS LOGICAL TO SUGGEST THAT THE AMBASSADOR, BECAUSE OF
HIS POSITION AND HIS CLOSE CONTACTS WITH THE TOP GOVERNMENT
AUTHORITIES AND KEY DEMOCRATIC PARTY OFFICIALS, CONTINUOUSLY
HAMMER HOME TO THEM THE NEED FOR REJUVENATION AND RESURGENCE NOT
ONLY OF THE D.C. BUT ALSO THE PLI' PRI AND PSDI TO WHICH THOSE
DISSIDENT D.C. VOTERS MIGHT TURN INSTEAD OF TO THE PCI.

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2. SICILIAN POLITICIANS OF ALL PARTIES, EXCEPT PCI OF COURSE,
AND OTHERS SEEM TO BE OF A MIND IN FEELING THAT THE U.S. MUST AID
SICILY. ALL HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS, NONE OF WHICH INVOLVE FUNDING
THE D.C. OR OTHER LAY PARTIES. SOME SUGGESTIONS ARE GOOD AND
WHICH I SECOND; OTHERS, WITH SOME REFINING, MIGHT BE GIVEN
CONSIDERATION. THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(A) THE U.S. MAKE A GREAT EFFORT TO REKINDLE THE TRADITIONAL
SYMPATHY OF THE ITALIANS TOWARD THE U.S. AND HER DEMOCRATIC
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INSTITUTIONS PRIMARILY THROUGH CULTURAL MEANS TO COUNTER-BALANCE

THE BAD PUBLICITY THE U.S. HAS BEEN GETTING RECENTLY (CIA, CORRUPTION AT HOME, BRIBERY OF FOREIGN OFFICIALS BY MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES, ETC.). THIS CULTURAL OFFENSIVE COULD BE LAUNCHED THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA ON BOTH SIDES, THE ARTS, PUBLISHING HOUSES, ETC., WITH A STRONG ASSIST FROM USIS. THE BICENTENNIAL YEAR MIGHT OFFER THEMES AND POSSIBILITIES IN THIS REGARD.

(B) THE U.S. QUIETLY RPT QUIETLY (1) ASSIST THE D.C. AND LAY PARTIES, IF THEY WISH, IN THE PREPARATION OF AN ALL-OUT CAMPAIGN TO REBUT VIGOROUSLY ASSERTIONS THAT PCI IS ITALY'S BEST FRIEND AND TO KNOCK DOWN ITS "GOOD BOY" IMAGE; AND (2) ASSIST THE D.C. IN LOOSENING THE STRANGLEHOLD THE COMMUNISTS HAVE ON RAI-TV.

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MOREOVER, THIS CAMPAIGN SHOULD BE SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO, SOME FEEL, WILL LIKELY SWING THE PCI TO VICTORY. THERE IS PLENTY OF AMMUNITION AVAILABLE TO SHOW THE WEAKNESSES OF THE PCI AND WHAT CAN HAPPEN ONCE THEY GAIN POWER (WITNESS, PORTUGAL, SPAIN, LACK OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MOVEMENT WITHIN AND OUT OF USSR, ITS OVERT INTERFERENCE MILITARILY AND OTHERWISE IN OTHER STATES, SIDE-STEPPING DETENTE, ETC.).

(C) THE U.S. TO SET UP A RADIO TV STATION IN MALTA OR GREECE, PATTERNED AFTER THAT OF INDRO MONTANELLI IN MONTE CARLO, SERVICING SOUTHERN ITALY AND SICILY. (NOTE: THIS WOULD REQUIRE LOTS OF MONEY AND CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL, WITH DOUBTFUL RESULTS EVEN IN THE MERIDIONALE, PARTICULARLY IF IT WERE KNOWN THAT IT WAS INSPIRED AND FINANCED BY THE U.S.A.).

(D) U.S. ECONOMIC AID TO HELP ITALIAN INDUSTRY TO SURVIVE, WHATEVER U.S. POLITICAL POLICY MAY BE, SINCE BOLSTERING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WITHOUT BOLSTERING THE ECONOMY MAY STILL LEAD TO DISASTER FOR ITALY. THERE ARE HOWEVER PITFALLS IN ACTING TOO PRECIPITOUSLY. IF OUR POLITICAL POLICY SHOULD FAIL THE U.S. MAY WELL HAVE SHORED UP THE ITALIAN ECONOMY FOR THE PCI.

3. COMMENTS: WHILE MY PERSONAL CHOICES ARE ONLY FOR 1 AND 2(A)

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ABOVE, I ALSO FEEL ANY OVERT ACTION BY THE AMERICAN GOVT TO
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INFLUENCE THE ITALIAN ELECTORATE IN ANY OTHER WAY WOULD IN THE END BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND COULD WELL BRING ON ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS TRIGGERED BY THE VOLATILE LEFT EVEN IN SICILY WHICH STILL RETAINS A HIGH REGARD FOR THE U.S. MOREOVER IT WOULD BE HARD, PARTICULARLY IN THIS BICENTENNIAL YEAR, TO EXPLAIN HOW A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY LIKE THE U.S., WHICH PRIDES ITSELF IN RESPECTING THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS TO DECIDE THEIR FORM OF GOVERNMENT, CAN OVERTLY INTERVENE IN THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF ITALY.

4. WHAT IS MOST BOTHERSOME TO ME IN THIS EXERCISE IS THIS: IF THE U.S. IS SO ADAMANT IN KEEPING THE PCI OUT OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, AS IT HAS NOW PUBLICLY STATED, WHAT DOES THE U.S. PLAN TO DO SHOULD THE PCI IN FACT COME TO POWER WITH OR WITHOUT AN ELECTION? IT IS MY FIRM BELIEF THAT ONLY BEFORE COMING TO TERMS WITH THAT POSSIBILITY CAN ANY DECISION BE MADE ON WHAT ACTION, IF ANY, THE U.S. CAN AND SHOULD TAKE IN THE PRESENT ITALIAN SITUATION. IN OTHER WORDS, IF THE PCI SHOULD COME TO POWER, WHAT IS THE U.S. PREPARED TO DO: ABANDON ITALY, OR EAT CROW AND CREEP BACK INTO SOME KIND OF A RELATIONSHIP, EVEN IF IT IS SIMILAR TO THAT OF CURTAIN COUNTRIES? CHIAVARINI

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